

**One boy's wish made
all this possible**

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**Miller in WWI
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**What's On in
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Thursday, January 23 - Wednesday, January 29, 2014

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Borough's future sport stars get backing

See page 11

DRUG PUSHERS NOT WELCOME

Police in Basingstoke issue warning after series of 2014 raids

PEOPLE involved with the production and supply of drugs are not welcome in Basingstoke and throughout Hampshire - that's the message from police.

Officers in Basingstoke have been acting on intelligence to target people and premises believed to be connected to drug use or supply.

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

Since the beginning of this year, a number of people have been arrested and charged with a range of offences in connection with illegal drugs activity. The drive has been called 'Operation Fortress' - a campaign mounted by police and other agencies to reduce the harm of drug-related violence. In Basingstoke, a 44-year-old

local woman has been arrested on suspicion of conspiring to supply Class B drugs and permitting the use of a premises for the supply of Class B drugs.

A 40-year-old local man has been arrested on suspicion of conspiring to produce Class B drugs. Both have been bailed until April 8 pending further enquiries.

These arrests came as a result of information received by officers about suspicious activity at a house in Oakridge.

Officers also carried out a

search warrant at a house in Quilter Road, Brighton Hill. A 38-year-old woman and a 34-year-old man, both from Basingstoke, were cautioned for possession of a Class B drug.

In a separate incident, a 27-year-old London man was arrested in South Ham, and has been charged with two counts of possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply.

Three people have been arrested in Winchester and one more in Andover as part

of the operation.

One of the aims is to restrict the supply of Class A drugs and officers are keen to hear from anyone who is concerned about illegal drugs or drug-related crime in their neighbourhood.

People should be on the lookout for the following signs, and ring the police if they see anything suspicious:

- A sudden increase in visitors to a house or flat and people only staying for a very short time.
- Short exchanges between

small groups of people at or close to a flat or house

- Residents leaving a flat or house on numerous occasions throughout the day and returning a short time later
- People loitering in an area and using their mobile phones frequently
- New-looking or hire cars parked outside a house or flat that wouldn't normally be there, and being driven by somebody that you wouldn't normally associate with driving that style of car.

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Basing View to get £100k facelift

BASING View is set for a £100,000 grant to help with regeneration plans, after Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council was awarded the money from a European funding programme.

It will be used to boost local businesses in the area, and will support the implementation of a local action plan aimed at developing skills and employment.

The grant was given to the council by the European Union programme URBACT, and their Economic Strategies and Innovation in Medium-sized Cities (ESIMEC) scheme.

By Adam Flinn

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

It is the latest in a series of linked projects in Basingstoke that are supporting the regeneration of Basing View.

Cllr Ranil Jayawardena, deputy leader of BDBC, said: "Yet again, Basingstoke and Deane is leading the way when it comes to getting taxpayers' money back from Europe and putting it to good use here in Hampshire."

"This new grant will help our borough's children and young people get the skills they need for the future."

"It will also enable the council to raise the profile of Basing View internationally and encour-

age companies to relocate here in the years ahead."

The project is helping five ESIMEC members in Europe, with £129,000 (£106,000) of a combined budget of £425,000 coming to the borough.

The borough will work with the other four partners on the project to improve the delivery of its local action plan.

It will also work closely with the Basingstoke Skills and Employment Zone, a partnership bringing together a wider range of local partners involved in skills and employment development.

The news comes while another project being carried out in Basing View called Greenfit This, which is being delivered between 2012 and 2015 to explore sustainability in business parks.



• Cllr Ranil Jayawardena

News Bites

Let's scrub up!

RESIDENTS are being urged to take part in a big clean up operation currently taking place in the borough.

The two-week blitz began on Monday in Popley, and includes a mechanical sweep of all roads, cleaning and repainting Chineham play park, hedge cutting and shrub maintenance.

Support will come from the council's operations team and Sentinel Housing Association.

For more information, contact the council on 01256 844844.

Police appeal after series of burglaries in the area

A NECKLACE made from African animal hair and an Egyptian gold chain decorated with hieroglyphics are among several items stolen from a house in Lychpit on Monday.

The necklace has two leopard heads at the front, and a matching bracelet with a single leopard head was also taken.

A gold necklace with a Topaz bluestone, a necklace with amethyst and matching earring were also taken from the house in Olivers Walk, as was another gold ring and earring set.

The jewellery belonged to the resident's late mother.

The incident is just one of several in the Basingstoke area in the last few days, with four homes targeted in Hatch Warren and Brighton Hill last Thursday.

Offenders broke into houses on Birches Crest, Mathias Walk, The Crofts and Ellington Drive.

And a handbag was stolen from a house in Grove Road, Basingstoke on Saturday, but this has since been recovered.

Also on Monday, a man disturbed two burglars who were at his home in Magnus Drive.

Despite chasing them out of his property and down the street, they got away with cash, cigarettes and car keys.

WOW! Hospital staff to be honoured at celebration night

OVER 100 Basingstoke and Hampshire hospital staff members who won WOW! awards last year are to be given special recognition at a celebratory evening.

During 2013, Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust received more than 1,000 nominations for WOW! Awards, which acknowledge those staff who provide excellent customer care and go beyond the call of duty. Nominations are made by public and staff and judged by the Foundation Trust's public governors.

Guest speaker for the evening on February 4 will be Liz Jackson MBE, a business leader and author who was one of Channel 4's Secret Millionaires. Derek Williams, the founder of The WOW! Awards, will also be speaking.

Christine Rowley from Bas-

ingstoke Hospital Radio will comper the evening, which will be attended by special guests, including Mayor of Basingstoke Councillor Dan Putty.

The evening will include awards from the Rotary clubs of Andover, Basingstoke and Winchester. There will be additional prizes for each division, plus a Chairman's special prize.

Chief Nurse Donna Green said: "The WOW! awards are a great way to recognise our staff."

"We have an outstanding group of staff and the awards highlight the dedication and hard work they put in to deliver high quality services for our patients."

"Our staff have been nominated for some amazing things and this is a small gesture to celebrate and recognise this."

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust introduced The WOW! awards in 2009.

Bank card thief targeted by cops

POLICE want to speak to this man after a purse was stolen from a car in the parking area of Daneshill School in Stratfield Turgis.

The theft, on January 13, took place between 2.30pm and 3.30pm.

The woman's bank card was subsequently used at cash machines at the Premier convenience store in Hook and the Tesco store in Hook later that afternoon, with £300 in total taken from the victim's account.

PC Mark Pullman said: "Do you recognise this man? If you know who it is please contact me as soon as possible."

Anyone with any information is asked to contact PC Pullman at Basingstoke Police Station



• Do you know this man?

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Alternatively, call the charity Crimestoppers line on 0800 555 111, where information can be left anonymously.



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'There's a real buzz about the town at the moment'

AMBITIOUS plans for the financial outlook of Basingstoke for the next 20 years have been unveiled by the borough council.

BDBC's 'masterplan' is effectively a shopping list of major proposals the authority wants to achieve between now and 2033.

The council hopes the move will attract government funding and encourage companies to bring new jobs to the borough.

Council leader Clive Sanders

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

is excited about the vibe that he believes is around the town at the moment.

"There is a real 'buzz' about Basingstoke at the moment with lots of exciting things going on," Cllr Sanders said.

"This has not happened by accident but the result of what the

council and key partners have carefully planned.

"It is vital that we now have a clear vision of what our borough could be 20 years from now and how we can build our future success.

"This economic master plan sets out our stall to compete for investment to keep our borough thriving.

"It shows we have real ambition; that Basingstoke is really going somewhere. Working

together with our partners, we are driving the borough's future success, not just hoping that it will happen."

The council has also stressed the plan is very much for the town rather than the authority.

The move was developed in conjunction with Hampshire County Council, colleges in the town, Basingstoke Hospital, the area's police force and other organisations and businesses.

Major projects that have

been listed in the masterplan include:

- Area wide infrastructure improvements to support the economic development of Basingstoke would be associated with the Manydown housing development. Could include a new secondary school, country park and safeguarding the future potential to provide for a western by-pass for Basingstoke, potentially linking M3 Junction 7 to the A339.

- Improvements to the A33 corridor, including changes to alleviate congestion at the junctions at Crockford Lane roundabout, Thornhill Way crossroads and Binfields roundabout. There are also plans for a Taylors Farm / Sherfield Park link road. The county council estimates that the works to the junctions would cost around £6m with the link road costing around £1.5m.

- A £5.5million new railway station at Chineham in Basingstoke. The line between Basingstoke and Reading is due to be electrified in the near future which will increase the capacity for stopping stations on this line, acting as an incentive for network operators to serve a new station.

- The council is looking into the feasibility of working together with its Basing View development partner Muse to build new

developments of 'ready to move into' flexible office space to meet demand from both large corporate companies and small and medium businesses.

- Superfast broadband development is needed for commercial areas, especially for Chineham Park and Basing View.

- There are a number of potential regeneration sites within the Top of the Town area that are likely to need some public sector funding to deliver development that fits with current business and residential uses.

- The current transport system for the town centre needs some strategic assessment and remodelling, especially to integrate traffic flow, cycling and pedestrian routes, rail and bus transport.

- The regeneration of the Leisure Park gives the opportunity to develop new uses and attract new investment, with land available at the eastern end of the park and possible through more efficient layout of the car parks.

The plans were discussed at last night's Economic Prosperity and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the Observer went to press.

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Students host Chinese counterparts



• Xinghua High School students during their visit to Alton College

STUDENTS from Alton College hosted students from China this month, ahead of some returning and studying at the centre full-time next year.

Fifteen visitors from Xinghua High School in the Eastern Chinese province of Jiangsu, accompanied by their English teacher and Vice-Director of Foreign Affairs from the school, Mr Wang Jianhua, spent 10 days shadowing their student hosts and living with their families.

Seven of the fifteen students are the first to have enrolled in Alton College's new International Student Intake programme, designed to attract young people from overseas keen to gain AS and A2 level qualifications prior to continuing their studies at a UK University.

Andrew Cox, Alton College's International Manager, said: "We are thrilled to be hosting our Chinese guests and show them all of the wonderful facilities that the College has to offer."

"We are also delighted that the UK Border Agency has recently granted us 'Highly Trusted Sponsor' status, this being an essential component of our future International Student Recruitment Programme."

"We hope that the positive experience gained by our visitors on their short visit will encourage others to follow in their footsteps, which will enrich the cultural diversity of College life as well as building new and lasting friendships."

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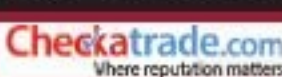
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Adult care budget is 'biggest challenge'

THE county council's adult social care chief has said it is one of the authority's "biggest challenges" in meeting demand for services.

Hampshire County Council elected to close down Deeside Care Home in South Ham at the end of last year, saying it was too expensive to maintain.

This was despite protests from counterparts at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

Two other homes in the county were also axed for similar reasons.

And the council member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, Liz Fairhurst, said the county's ageing population was putting added pressure on the budget, which is facing a 12 per cent cut that needs to be in place by April 2015.

"One of our biggest challenges is in meeting the increasing demand for social care from Hampshire's ageing population, which is growing by about 1,000 each year.

"This, combined with the more complex care required by older residents and adults with learning disabilities, is putting significant pressure on the Adult Services' budget, adding £10million a year to the cost of care."

Cllr Fairhurst has suggested linking Adult Services with Health, a move she said is finan-

cially "crucial".

"Greater integration with Health will be crucial for the financial stability of adult social care and the maintenance of key services related to hospital discharge and reablement," she added.

HCC spends around £1million every day on adult care, and Adult Services is the second largest area of spend within the County Council with a gross budget of £436million.

Budget proposals focus on transforming and providing a wider range of services to better manage demand and support people to live independently for as long as possible - improving their wellbeing and quality of life. In doing so, this would allow the council to focus more on those with the greatest or most complex need, including the increasing numbers of people with dementia.

This would include expanding 'reablement' services that are offered to help people leaving hospital regain their confidence and independence. In future, reablement would be offered to everyone in receipt of adult social care.

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

Do you know the identity of this person?

OFFICERS investigating an attempted burglary at a house in Ox Drove in Burghclere want to speak to this man.

The incident happened sometime between December 27 and January 1.

PC Alex Hall said: "Did you see anything suspicious in the area between Christmas and New Year?"

"Do you know who this person is?"

Anyone with any information is asked to call PC Hall at Basingstoke Police Station on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

Contact the Newsdesk on 01235 516930

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Seven-figure boost for county cops

HAMPSHIRE'S chief constable says being awarded £1.1million from the Home Office is "clear recognition" of the force's growing reputation for innovation.

Police and crime commissioner Simon Hayes bid for £1.1million from the Home Office Innovation Fund for five separate initiatives.

The money will be used to develop an integrated business centre to enable joint working between the constabulary, fire and rescue service and county council.

It will also be used to establish co-located multi-agency Safer Neighbourhood Team bases, development of a Digital Case File, improve mobile data provision to all officers and the roll out of body worn video technology.

Chief Constable Andy Marsh said: "I am extremely pleased that we have been awarded £1.1million from the £20million available to be bid for by police forces across England and Wales.

"This amount is clear recognition of our force's growing reputation for innovation and improving policing through maximising the use of modern technology.

"Amongst many other ground-breaking initiatives, the funding will allow us to further roll out use of body worn video to all of our front-line uniformed officers.

"This will definitely help to keep us at the cutting edge of this technology - not just in Britain - but anywhere in the world."



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from Ford, Jaguar to Land Rover and Volkswagen.

Fastfit offers everything from MOTs and minor servicing to major repairs and complex engine work.

More complex issues include an Engine Control Unit (ECU) remapping service which makes the vehicle more responsive and smoother to driver. In these tough time, it also slightly increases the miles-per-gallon!

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Cheers,
Clive Baldwin

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These guys definitely know what they're talking about and I would recommend them to anyone!

Chris H

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£48k memorial funding boost

By Adam Flinn

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

BASINGSTOKE'S Milestone Museum is one of a number of places across Hampshire which is planting poppies, to commemorate 100 years since the start of the First World War and 70 years since D-Day.

It comes as part of Hampshire County Council's awarding of more than £48,000 to 52 community organisations to mark the anniversaries.

Funding of between £200 and £2,000 is being given to help community-led projects in the region through the 'Hampshire Commemorates' scheme.

The scheme will form part of a number of events and initiatives for the anniversaries planned by the county council.

Cllr Keith Chapman, executive member for culture, recreation and countryside, said: "Hampshire and its communities played a unique and internationally significant role during both the First World War and D-Day."

"These grants have been awarded for projects that engage communities in the commemorations and help them understand the role of their local area."

"Last February full council set aside £100,000 from the 2013/14 budget to support this programme, including £50,000 of grant funding, which will also complement the national programme backed by government."

"The wider commemorative programme across cultural venues will continue during the 2014-18 period."

"The county council is working in partnership with the National Museum of the Royal Navy to mark the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign in 2015, and bring back to life the historic HMS Monitor M33 which served there."

More information about the groups that received grants, as well as details of events, can be found on the council website: www.hants.gov.uk.

News Bites

Wheelie dangerous

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after reports of offenders throwing wheelie bins from a footbridge onto a busy road were made last Thursday.

Three calls from concerned members of the public were received by police at around 7.40pm, relating to the footbridge running between Stratfield Road and Abbey Road onto the A339.

No injuries were reported as a result of the incident.

PCSO Richard Green, from Basingstoke police station, said: "The behaviour of those responsible was thoughtless and extremely dangerous to road users, especially as it was dark at the time." Call 101 with information.

Keep an eye on your home, say police

POLICE in Basingstoke are reminding residents to keep their properties secure following a number of burglaries in the town.

On January 12, between 4pm and 8pm, offenders broke into a house in Galloway Close, and stole watches and jewellery.

On the same day, between 5.40pm and 8.45pm, jewellery, cash and watches were stolen from a house in Pack Lane.

Officers are also investigating a report of an attempted burglary in Coniston Road, which happened between January 11 and January 13.

Also on January 11, offenders broke into a house in Neville Close. The resident noticed items had been moved around in her property. It is believed the offenders may have been disturbed.

PC Mark Pullman said: "Do you know anything about any of these incidents? Have you seen people acting suspiciously or cars you don't recognise in your local area?"

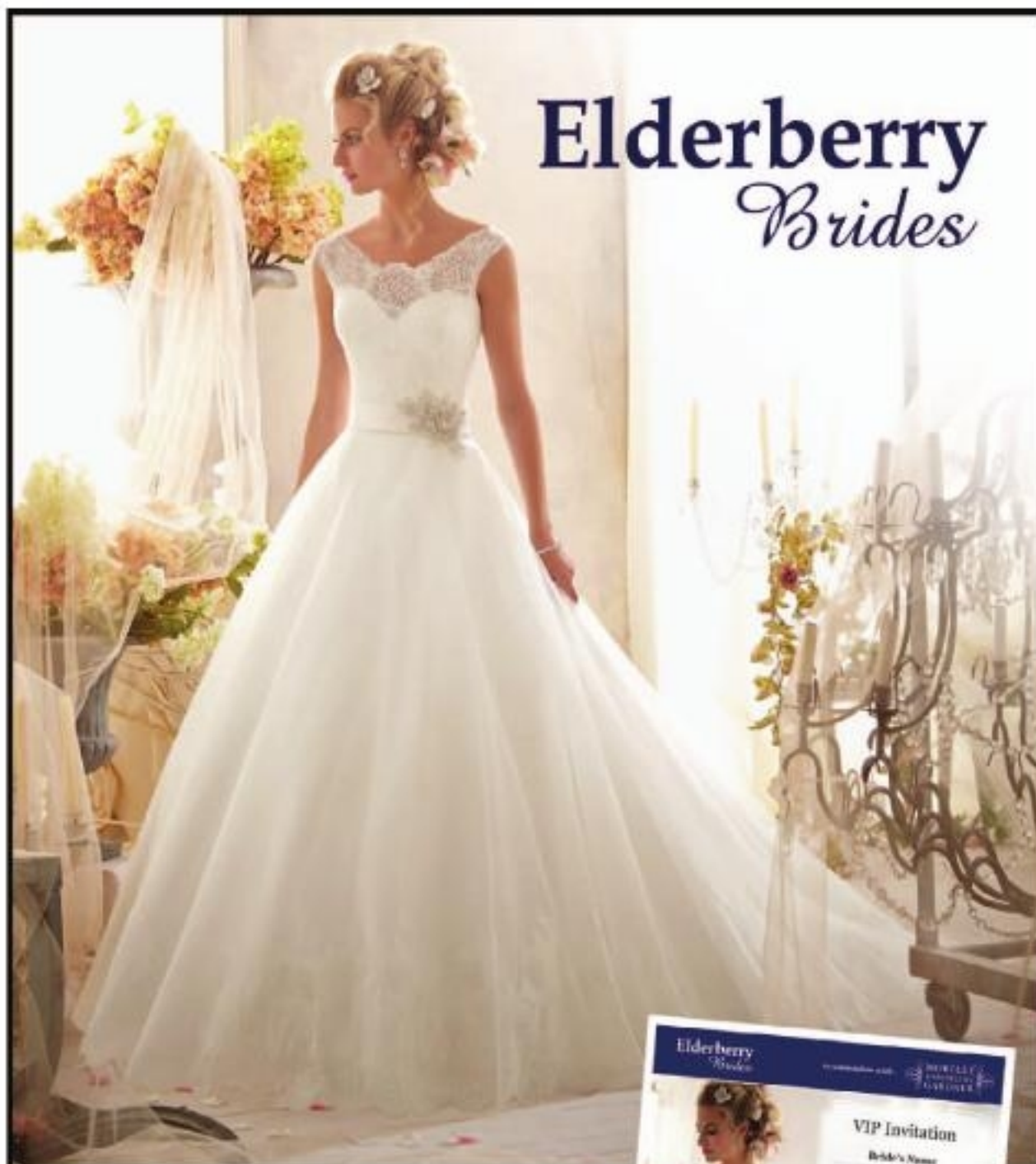
"If you have any information which could assist our investigations, please contact us."

"I would also like to remind people to ensure their doors and windows are kept secure. Don't leave ladders or heavy implements in your garden - these could be used by offenders to try and break into your home."



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One boy's wish made all this possible

A CHILDREN'S charity is celebrating after 10 years caring for the borough's seriously ill youngsters.

Sebastian's Action Trust started in 2004 in memory of nine-year-old Sebastian Gates, who died the year before after being diagnosed with a Wilms tumour in 2001.

It was Sebastian's wish that a holiday home should be started for seriously ill children and their families, to be open all year round for them to visit.

And the Bluebells centre in North Waltham, which opened in July 2011, has proven to be the UK's only respite holiday home for children.

Sebastian's mother Jane is the trust's director.

"The Bluebells is only part of our story," she said. "Our services began with practical support - helping families in whatever ways we could to address unmet needs, while we raised funds to build The Bluebells."

"Our family services have developed beyond all recognition and we plan for them to grow further, in this our anniversary year."

• Sebastian Gates

News Bites

Golden chance

COUPLES celebrating special anniversaries this year are being invited to a reception with Basingstoke and Deane's Mayor.

Cllr Dan Putty is holding a special reception at the civic offices on March 11 for married couples whose golden or diamond anniversary falls between May 9 and May 29.

Cllr Putty said: "Golden and diamond anniversaries are very special milestones and it is an honour and privilege to be able to join in the celebrations with so many couples from around the borough."

Couples should call the council's contact centre on 01256 844844.

We will not put you at risk - BDBC leader

BASINGSTOKE and Deane Borough Council's leader is reassuring residents their safety will not be compromised, despite county council plans to cut community patrols.

The county council has announced that it is proposing to cease its Accredited Community Safety Service across Hampshire by December 31, subject to discussions with the

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire.

The proposals will be considered by the county council leader and Executive Member for Policy and Resources, Roy Perry, on January 24.

BDBC leader, Clive Sanders, said people's safety was a "top priority" for the authority to maintain.

Cllr Sanders said: "Being and feeling safe - either at home or out and about is one of the top priorities in ensuring a good quality of life for our residents."

"The community safety patrol team works closely with communities and the police carrying out

high visibility patrols and deterring and combating antisocial behaviour."

"Since we introduced community safety patrol officers, we have seen crime and antisocial behaviour drop to a record low level. I want to ensure that this continues."

"If Hampshire County Council decides to withdraw its side of the service, we will not allow the safety of our residents to be affected and will take whatever measures are necessary to ensure the effectiveness of our community safety patrol team is maintained."

In Basingstoke and Deane, since 2010 the county council's service has been enhanced by the borough council providing additional staff - the only district in Hampshire to do so.

The county council's proposed decision would mean the end of this shared patrolling service.

Under the agreement with the county council, there is a joint team with a minimum of 16 staff - six funded by the county council and 10 by borough council.

The team is managed by the county council as part of its Hampshire-wide service. These patrol officers work closely together with the police-led 'safer neighbourhood' teams to combat crime and anti-social behaviour.

News Bites

Twitter arrest

HAMPSHIRE Constabulary are continuing to investigate a teenager over racist comments posted on Twitter relating to the death of toddler Mikael Kular in Scotland.

The 19-year-old reportedly made the comment on Saturday night. He was questioned at a Hampshire police station and released on bail.

A Hampshire Constabulary spokesman said: "We are investigating the message to assess whether any criminal offences have been committed."

Handbag theft

A **PENSIONER** was left "shocked and frightened" after having her handbag stolen in Basingstoke.

The 65-year-old was approached by a man as she walked along Tobago Close on January 3.

He then snatched the bag, which contained £20, cards and her pension book.

The offender is white, 5ft 2ins, of medium build and had short, dark curly hair.

Call 101 or Crimestoppers with information.

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

Contact the Newsdesk on 01235 516930

or email news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

Miller in WW1 school visit



• Maria Miller with pupils at Winklebury Infant and Junior School

BASINGSTOKE MP Maria Miller recently met pupils at Winklebury Infant and Junior Schools to talk about the First World War and the importance of remembering those who fought in the conflict 100 years ago.

Speaking to pupils in their morning assemblies, Maria explained about the conditions in which people fought, and about matters of local interest, including Basingstoke War Memorial and the airman John Aidan Liddell, who was awarded the Victoria Cross and is buried in South View Cemetery.

Mrs Miller said: "The Borough Council, County Council and other organisations are making plans to ensure that the

Centenary of the First World War is marked in a fitting way throughout the Borough, and I know that many schools across Basingstoke are also getting involved. It is really important that our children understand the sacrifice made by those who went to war, and also the enormous impact that the war had on society."

Christine Clayton, head of federation, said: "The school was very pleased to welcome Mrs Miller to talk about the centenary of the First World War. The children learned about significant events in Basingstoke during the war, and it was an excellent opportunity for the children to meet an MP as part of their citizenship education."

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News Bites

Hats off to Regus

A BASINGSTOKE-BASED business is supporting a special charity day in support of St. Mungo's on January 31.

Regus, who have offices in Chineham, are supporting the charity's Woolly Hat Day.

The day is designed to help the charity provide housing, health and work projects to homeless people across London and the South East.

Chance to dream

CAR manufacturer Honda is bringing its 'School of Dreams' to Everest Community Academy in Basingstoke on January 28 and 29.

The team from Honda will provide a free two-day 'thinking skills' workshop for 9-13-year-olds.

It is designed to help young people to understand the importance of pursuing their dreams, and teaches skills and strategies to help turn them into reality.

Make a difference

BUDDING volunteers are being urged to attend drop-in sessions at the end of this month to help make a difference in the community.

Staff at the Volunteer Centre will be holding a session between 10am and 12noon to answer questions, make appointments and point people in the right direction.

Sarah Robinson, manager of volunteering at Basingstoke Voluntary Services, said: "Volunteering can make a huge difference in your life."

"You can gain skills or experience and build your confidence."

Drink-driver numbers fall in Basingstoke

THE number of drink-drivers caught in Basingstoke and Deane has fallen by one of the largest proportions in the county.

The 'Is It Worth the Risk?' campaign, a joint operation between Hampshire and Thames Valley Police, targeted people who drive under the influence of drink or drugs.

While statistics largely remained constant to last year's findings, the number of drivers caught in the Basingstoke area fell from 21 to 15.

This drop in six drivers was equalled only by motorists on the Isle of Wight.

In comparison, Havant saw a rise in eight drivers caught, East Hants and Winchester seven and Andover five.

Over 200 drivers were arrested in total.

Superintendent Chris Brown, head of Roads Policing for Hampshire and the Thames Valley, said: "We ran operations throughout December and have taken 213 impaired drivers off the roads."

"In one night's operation alone we stopped 247 cars."

"So it is time that we started tackling the whole impaired driving issue in a different way through intelligence-led targeted policing as we do other types of persistent criminality."

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

"This year, we have seen a reduction in the number of positive breath tests following a collision, and that 10 per cent reduction is a real positive for us."

"In fact the vast majority of motorists who were stopped actually blew zero."

"This shows us again that most people do get the message, but that we seem to be dealing with people who are often dependent on or persistently misusing alcohol."

"We use the legislation and power that we have as widely and effectively as possible, and we will continue to do that year round."

"But it is time to start thinking more broadly to target offenders, further reduce road casualties and make a positive impact on reducing drink and drug drive offences."

Hampshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Hayes added: "I would like to see these figures fall still further."

"Everyone has a part to play in this by reporting anyone who chooses to ignore the law by drinking or taking mind altering substances before they get behind the wheel."

Helping the region's future sporting stars



BASINGSTOKE'S young sporting stars are set to get a funding boost as part of the 2012 Olympic Legacy Programme.

The programme, a joint venture between Hampshire County Council and Sport Hampshire and Isle of Wight, has awarded £92,000 to the Hampshire Talented Athlete Scheme (HTAS).

The three-year commitment is set to benefit 220 athletes in Basingstoke and across Hampshire.

Stars who have benefited from

HTAS in the past include women's hockey star Alex Danson, from Odiham, and Hampshire-based Olympic cycling champion Dani King.

And the organisation are reaffirming their commitment to the next generation of the region's sporting stars.

England Under-20 rugby ladies player Devon Holt, from Tadley, said: "Thank you to Sport Hampshire & IOW and Hampshire County Council, this grant will make a huge difference to me

and my parents and help me develop my rugby career."

Hampshire County Council's executive member for Culture and Recreation, Councillor Keith Chapman, said: "Hampshire has a strong sporting heritage, with many exceptional sportsmen and women living in the county."

"The Hampshire Talented Athlete Scheme goes some way to providing much needed support to these committed, talented and determined sportsmen and women."

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Daylight robbery as tools taken

DETECTIVES are investigating the theft of approximately £4,500 of power tools from a Basingstoke company.

Three men in a silver Ford Galaxy were seen on CCTV entering a warehouse at Speedy Hire on Armstrong Road, at approximately 1pm on Monday January 6.

Ten pieces of equipment, mainly Husqvarna disc cutters, were taken.

The warehouse was empty at the time of the offence as staff were on a lunch break.

Entry was gained through a shutter which was left open.

PC John Pickering said: "This is a rare occurrence but was committed in broad daylight."

"The car is believed to have been loitering in the Armstrong Road area beforehand."

"Therefore I'd urge anyone who may have seen the car or may be able to report any similar sightings to contact us."

Anyone with any information is asked to contact PC John Pickering on 101 or via the website www.hampshire.police.uk/internet/contact/message_officer.htm.

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The glamour of the Red Carpet

By Seb Hall

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

THIS Saturday will see the return of Basingstoke's glamorous and entertaining film festival: Red Carpet Screenings.

This quarterly event features an eclectic selection of short films from around the UK, alongside live on-stage interviews with film makers and film industry guest panellists.

The festival will be held in Central Studio Basingstoke and will start at 7pm.

BBC Radio Berkshire's Mike Read and 'Strangers In A Cinema' film critic Paul Anderson will attend and take part in a post screening Q&A session.

The films to be featured at the event include: 'Soul Matrix', a comedy by award-winning local film makers Pork Chop Pictures starring Lauren Shotton (Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix) and Paul F Taylor (Writers Block), 'The Boy With A Camera For A Face', a satirical fairytale by Spencer Brown, starring Steven Berkoff (The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo, Rambo: First Blood Part 2), 'Tippet', a futuristic drama directed by Sophie Kenny starring Robin Brown (Torchwood - TV Series, Broadchurch - TV Series), 'Bliss:

The Masquerade', a crime drama by film maker & poet Tyrone Lewis - Starring Vauxhall Jermaine (Stephen Hawkins Universe The Theory Of Everything - Documentary), 'Tanabata', a supernatural drama by Andreas Sheittanis - Starring Olivia Busby (Casualty - TV), 'Audition', a psychological thriller directed by Dan Allen starring Carey Thring (From Hell), and 'Back To Young' Episode 1, the first episode of a six part webisode series by Monkey Dribble Films starring Kevin Over (Subject A).

Red Carpet Screenings have been staging film festivals, premiere screening events and promotional PR activities designed to propel the world of independent film to the forefront of public attention since May 2010.

Their events provide the film community with the rare opportunity to screen their work to large live audiences, whilst also creating unique networking hubs across the UK.

Guest panellist Paul Anderson said: "It's exciting to come back to Basingstoke to see how the film community is developing. "I'm very much looking for-



BBC DJ Mike Read will feature in this weekend's Red Carpet Screenings festival

ward to a warm welcome and the chance to meet film makers at the festival."

A Red Carpet Screenings spokesperson said: "The creative industries have seen huge changes over the past few years and I'm always keen to promote new opportunities to our independent media community."

According to the Department for Media, Culture and Sport, the UK's creative industries are its fastest growing sector, worth £71.4bn a year, and making up 5.6 per cent of the workforce.

Tickets are £7 and are available from the Central Studio Box Office on 01256 418318, or available at the door on the night.

Chief nurse backs report on patient care levels

HAMPSHIRE Hospitals' chief nurse has supported a report which shows that the way healthcare staff feel about their work impacts on the quality of patient care and an organisation's efficiency and financial performance.

Donna Green, chief nurse and deputy chief executive at Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, was part of a national advisory panel of senior NHS figures who assisted the Point Of Care Foundation with their report 'Staff Care: How to engage staff in the NHS and why it matters'.

The report, published last week, highlights that caring about staff is the key to developing a caring and compassionate health service.

Donna Green said: "I was pleased to be asked to be part of this study and to be able to share the work that we do at Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to value, recognise, develop and support our staff so that they can provide the best possible care for our patients."

"We introduced Schwartz Rounds, which the Point of Care Foundation highlight in their report as a way to help staff come together to discuss the emotional impact of working in a very demanding environment."

"This shows how team work and support from manager is really important."

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Have you heard the rumours?



CENTRAL Studio are inviting families to the Kingdom of Rumours, a magical land that is the setting for puppet theatre show The Golden Princess.

It follows the story of Princess Suzanna the Golden, who is rich and famous but not happy, and only Melo the one-legged musician has the gift to help her.

The show is performed by the Lempen Puppet Theatre Company, who wrote the story of The Golden Princess themselves.

Artistic director Liz Lempen said: "The princess lives in the Kingdom of Rumours, a land where everything gets distorted and twisted."

"It's a story of a princess learning to love herself basically, and the story of a friendship between this one-legged musician and the princess."

"It's a one-man show told with music, acting and gurning, and it's a gentle, poetic, beautiful story which hopefully warms the hearts of everyone that goes to see it."

The company have been creating and performing puppet

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

theatre shows since the 1980s, and specialise in contemporary fairytales that have been staged across the UK and Europe.

Liz and husband Daniel previously came to Central Studio last year with a production called Journey of Turtle.

"It went down very well," Liz added. "If people saw Journey of Turtle a year ago, they might remember to come back or tell people they know about it."

"Although we produced The Golden Princess two or three years ago, it's gone down really well when we've performed it at puppet festivals, and people often say this is one of our best shows."

"As well as performing, we're now in the process of building our 20th production called Little Frankenstein, which will be out in the summer."

Tickets cost £6 for adults and £5 for children, and the show begins at 11am on Saturday. For booking details, go to www.centralstudio.co.uk or phone 01256 418318.



• Daniel Lempen performs The Golden Princess at Central Studio on Saturday

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Entertainment

Welcome to our Entertainments page where we are showcasing all that is good in local entertainment ranging from professional to amateur acts. If you would like your event considered for publication please contact reporter Adam Flinn at adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk or telephone 01235 516933

Alan's popping in for a chat

Let's Hang On

LET'S Hang On come to The Anvil tomorrow evening, performing their take on the music of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.

The music spans a number of decades, which was brought to iconic status with the Broadway hit musical Jersey Boys.

Tomorrow's show begins at 7.45pm, and tickets cost £21. Go to www.anvilarts.org.uk or call the box office on 01256 844244 to book.

Kinks reunited

ORIGINAL and long-term members of The Kinks reunite for a new show, coming to The Haymarket on Saturday.

Kast Off Kinks is made up of Mick Avory, Ian Gibbons and John Dalton, who are also joined by former Beach Boys performer David Clarke.

Tickets cost £19, and the show begins at 7.30pm. Booking information is available by calling 01256 844244, or, alternatively, going to www.anvilarts.org.uk.

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

STAND-UP comic and chat show host Alan Carr is coming to Bordon's Phoenix Theatre next month, to try out his new material in a more intimate setting.

Alan is best known for his Channel Four talk show 'Chatty Man', and his gig on February 5 provides a unique opportunity to see one of the UK's most popular comedians.

He is one of a number of comics coming to Bordon in the next few months, in a line-up that includes Joel Dommett and Andrew Lawrence.

"I am delighted!" said Rob Allerston, theatre director at The Phoenix.

"The Phoenix Theatre is attracting some of the biggest comics in the country, and it really supports all the other work we do here."

"I can't wait for another great night of comedy."

Alan's showbiz career began in 2001 when he won the BBC New Comedy Award for Stand-up, and

had continued success touring in the immediate years afterwards.

The first series of 'Chatty Man' was broadcast in 2009, with the show celebrating its 100th episode last September.

Eleven series have now been

produced, where Alan has interviewed big names including Justin Timberlake, Samuel L Jackson and Rihanna, among countless others.

In the last three years, Alan has hosted his 'New Year Spectacular', and between 2009 and

2012 he also presented the BBC Radio Two show 'Going Out with Alan Carr'.

But as well as his television and radio work, Alan hasn't turned his back on stand-up, and in 2011 he completed his second live tour, with 33 performances

QMC production

SECOND-YEAR Acting Diploma students at Queen Mary's College stage a performance of Steven Berkoff's 'The Metamorphosis', adapted from the novel by Franz Kafka.

The play follows Gregor Samsa, an ordinary man who wakes up one day to discover he has become an insect.

Hosted by Central Studio, the venue is transformed into a world where duty and alienation are examined.

It takes place on Wednesday and Thursday next week, and tickets cost £5.

Go to www.centralstudio.co.uk.

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• Alan Carr comes to Bordon on February 5

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Entertainment

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25 January, 11am
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

THE SNOW QUEEN

With beautifully crafted songs, this Anderson tale will delight and enthrall all who watch. From the Sorcerer who creates the mirror that distorts people's stare, to the path of true love that Gerda shows Kay. This is an adventure story that follows Gerda on her search to find Kay who has been kidnapped by the Snow Queen. "www.centralstudio.co.uk"

25 January, 11am
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

THE GOLDEN PRINCESS

£6 full, ~£5 children
Melo, the strange, one legged musician, sits alone by the sea, content in his world and playing the most beautiful music. But who comes here? A golden carriage bearing a Princess so beautiful that she wears a golden mask to hide her blinding beauty. And she pushes him in the mud!
What kind of a world is this, where one who hides her beauty behaves so badly to the one with beauty at his fingertips? It is the Land of Rumours of course.
A theatrical performance using acting, puppets, shadows and music." www.centralstudio.co.uk

31 January, 7:30pm
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

SEAN HUGHES

~£15 full | ~£13 concession
The award winning comedian, writer and actor Sean Hughes presents his latest gem Penguins. Career guidance teachers, an angry monk, older brothers to losing his virginity - it's all there. You'll leave uplifted! It's a total joy." www.centralstudio.co.uk

7 February, 7:30pm
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

MILES JUPP

Tickets: ~£15
Miles Jupp - actor, writer and comedian will be discussing/ranting/describing: himself, you, domestic imprisonment, fatherhood, having to have opinions, hot drinks, the bloody government, bad balance, housing, ill health, the ageing process, navigation, other people's pants and, inevitably, a number of other things." www.centralstudio.co.uk

8 February, 11am
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

JACK AT THE BEANSTALK CAFE

~£6 full | ~£5 children
Hand to Mouth Theatre present a nourishing bean-feast of stories in the Beanstalk Cafe, including the sweet and sour tale of The Old Woman in a Vinegar Bottle, and a tasty take on Jack and the Beanstalk.
Watch and giggle as two full-grown adults play with their food as they search for the recipe for the perfect story.
Using imaginatively designed shadows and puppets, and including original live music and song." www.centralstudio.co.uk

12 February - 15 February, 7:30pm
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

LES MISERABLES, A SCHOOL EDITION

Tickets: ~£9.00 full | ~£7.00 concession | ~£5.00 students & children | ~£22.00 family (2 adults, 2 children)
The Extended Diploma Performing Arts and Music students present Victor Hugo's epic story, recounting the struggle against adversity in 19th century France. Featuring I Dreamed a Dream, On My Own and

One Day More, this famous stage musical version of Les Miserables is set to stir the heart and build on the success of previous productions including Tommy, Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and last year, Miss Saigon." www.centralstudio.co.uk

22 February, 8pm
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

THE MODS

Expect classics from the 60s and early 70s that encapsulate the true essence of Mod music and it's evolution through the late 60s summer of love into the heavier 70s. The Who, Small Faces, The Kinks, Toots and The Maytals, Desmond Dekker, Spencer Davis, Stevie Winwood, The Stones, The Beatles, Booker T and The MG's, Manfred Mann, Yardbirds, The Animals...this list could be endless." www.centralstudio.co.uk

28 February, 7:30pm
Central Studio Queen Mary's College

WOYZECK

Tickets: ~£10.50 full | ~£9.50 concessions | ~£6.00 students & children
Set amidst the backdrop of WW1, Woyzeck is a startling depiction of the lowly soldier plagued by visions of the apocalypse and plunged into homicidal lunacy by the world around him. Fusing gothic storytelling, puppetry, song and a spine chilling sound track, this brand new adaptation based on the play by Georg Buchner takes the audience into a world that is disturbingly atmospheric, heart breakingly poignant, darkly comic and delightfully interactive." www.centralstudio.co.uk

31 January - 1 February
Silchester Village Hall
ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES - PANTOMIME
www.silchesterplayers.hampshire.org.uk

7 February - 8 February
Silchester Village Hall
ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES - PANTOMIME
www.silchesterplayers.hampshire.org.uk

24 January, 7:45pm

THE ANVIL

LETS HANG ON

"A musical journey through the prolific career of one of the most successful bands of all time - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons. From their beginnings in the early 50s, the show takes you through hits such as Beggin, Grease, Bye Bye Baby, Sherry, Rag Doll, Take My Eyes Off You, December 1963 (Oh

What a Night!), Working My Way Back To You, Walk Like A Man, Big Girls Dont Cry, and many more, climaxing with a spectacular finale featuring, of course, Lets Hang On!
This recently revised production features brand new sound, lighting and AV screens.
Definitely not a night to be missed!

TICKETS: ~£21*
01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

31 January, 8pm
The Forge
THE WILL POUND BAND

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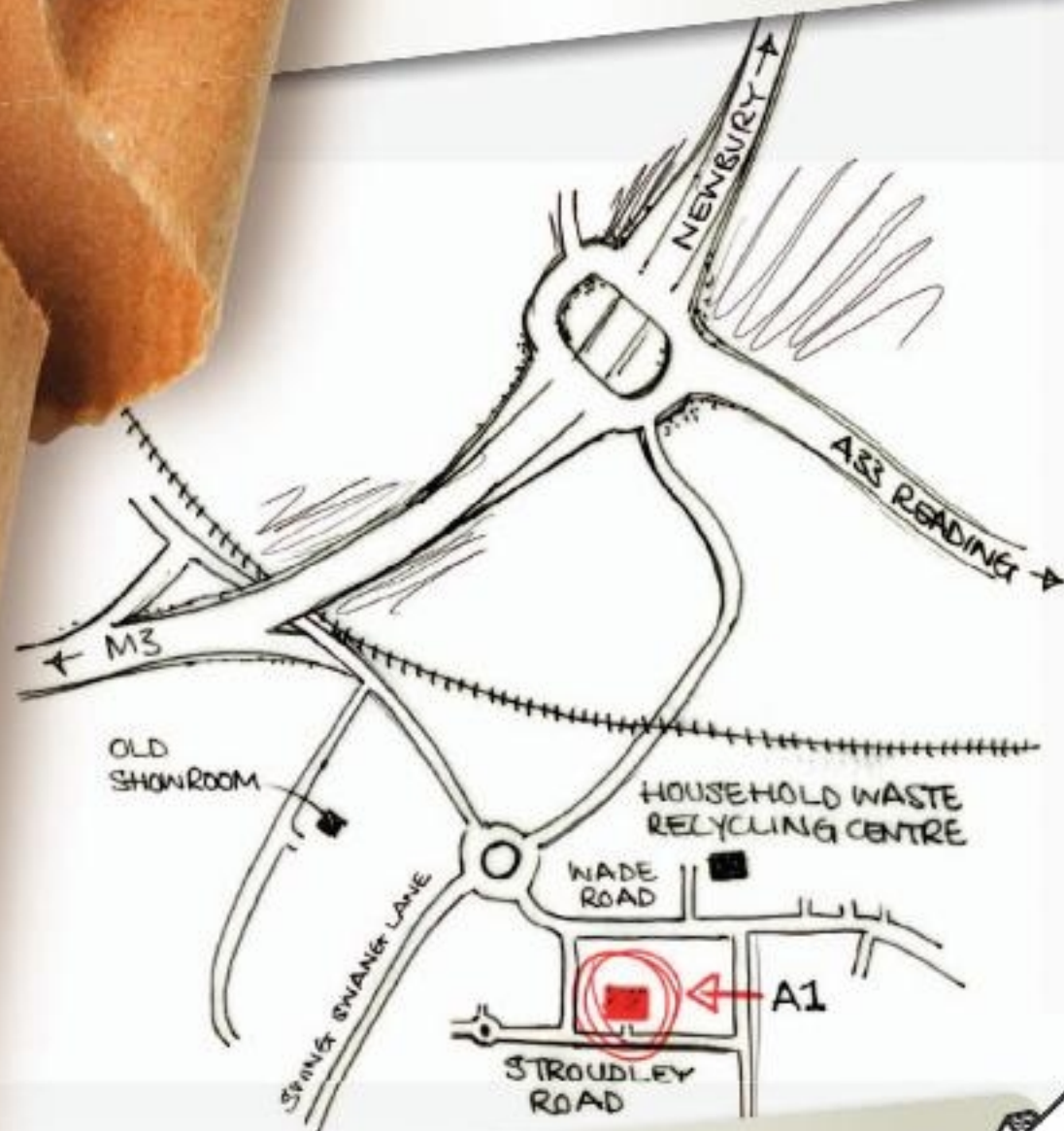
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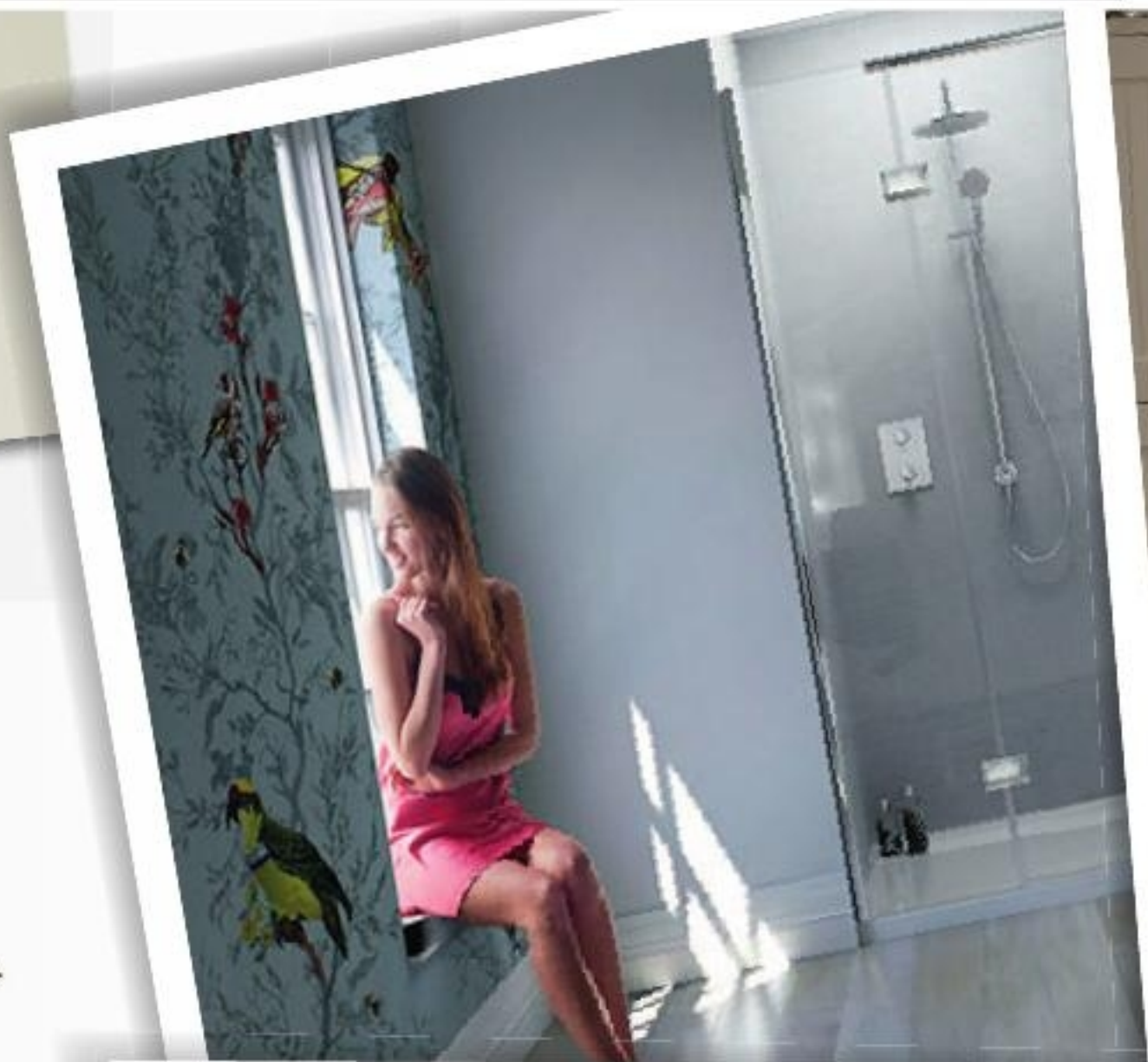
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Puzzles

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Sudoku

Place a number from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each 3x3 block, column, and full row includes each of the numbers from 1 to 9 only once. **EASY/MEDIUM/HARD**

8				6		9	2	
1	5					7	4	
				7	1	3		6
			1	6				9
3	9		5		2		6	4
	7				4	8		
4		2		5	7			
	8	3					1	5
	6	9		2				3

1		9				6		7
	5						2	
	2		6		7		4	
		8		3		5		
	3		5		1		9	
		1		9		2		
	6		7		4		8	
	8						1	
7		4				3		5

	9				4			
5				1			3	
	2	1			8	7		
				2			7	3
			3				1	
9	6				5			
			5	8			3	6
	4			7				2
			6					5

Two speed crossword

Quick Clues Across

- 1 Employments (11)
- 9 Pin (3)
- 10 Present (9)
- 11 Social rank (5)
- 13 Egyptian beetles (7)
- 14 Merchant ship (6)
- 16 Mendicant (6)
- 18 Picture to oneself (7)
- 19 Attain (5)
- 20 Treading roughly under foot (9)
- 21 Plan (3)
- 22 Commemorating festively (11)

Quick Clues Down

- 2 Tooth on wheel (3)
- 3 Fixed quantities (5)
- 4 Bear witness (6)
- 5 Early period of history (4,3)
- 6 Severe nerve pain (9)
- 7 Experts (11)
- 8 Critical literary examination (11)
- 12 Make worse (9)
- 15 Paint in dots (7)
- 17 Older (6)
- 19 Correct (5)
- 21 Males (3)

Cryptic Clues Across

- 1 His is a professional stick-up (5-6)
- 9 Strange drink (3)
- 10 Their understanding is 100% (9)
- 11 Force the little devil to join the Spaniard (5)
- 13 They are certainly absorbing (7)
- 14 Creatures of spirit (6)
- 16 Perhaps never include a point of superficial refinement (6)
- 18 Henry's the one for spoils (7)
- 19 Lightweight animal (5)
- 20 Scheme against the maniac maybe (9)
- 21 Nothing at grass? (3)
- 22 Declares the fool always gets a setback (11)

Cryptic Clues Down

- 2 Am to include single purpose (3)
- 3 Surpass 10 and 50 by the sound of it (5)
- 4 Just the ones in the height (6)
- 5 Number one part stinks (7)
- 6 Will it never grow old? (9)
- 7 Scandal to be in tears over the disgrace (6,5)
- 8 They are no snakes in the grass (3-8)
- 12 Draws out professional leaflets (9)
- 15 Where the skater is on dubious ground (4,3)
- 17 Oriental condition of property (6)
- 19 Musical work period (5)
- 21 Gold sounds an alternative (3)

	1	2		3		4		5		6		
7												8
9				10								
11		12				13						
14				15			16					
						17						
18								19				
20										21		
	22											

Scribble space

Last week's solutions

4	9	1	6	7	8	2	3	5
8	3	5	2	1	9	4	7	6
2	7	6	3	5	4	8	1	9
7	2	3	8	9	6	1	5	4
6	5	8	4	2	1	7	9	3
9	1	4	5	3	7	6	2	8
3	8	2	1	4	5	9	6	7
5	4	7	9	6	2	3	8	1
1	6	9	7	8	3	5	4	2

6	4	8	2	1	3	5	9	7
3	7	2	9	6	5	1	8	4
9	1	5	8	4	7	6	2	3
5	2	3	1	8	4	9	7	6
4	9	7	5	3	6	2	1	8
1	8	6	7	2	9	4	3	5
2	3	9	4	5	8	7	6	1
8	5	1	6	7	2	3	4	9
7	6	4	3	9	1	8	5	2

6	7	9	2	3	8	4	5	1
4	2	5	6	1	9	7	8	3
8	1	3	5	7	4	9	2	6
5	6	4	8	9	2	1	3	7
7	9	2	3	5	1	6	4	8
3	8	1	4	6	7	2	9	5
2	4	7	1	8	3	5	6	9
9	5	8	7	2	6	3	1	4
1	3	6	9	4	5	8	7	2

Quick Crossword

Across: 1 Branches 4 Crew 8 Sordid 10 Cellos 11 Medal
12 Camel 14 Repent 17 Designers 18 Anchovies
22 Cosset 23 Annual 24 Deals 26 Feared 27 Seemly
28 Lost 29 Mattered

Down: 1 Bust 2 Abroad 3 Chimes 5 Relies 6 Washtubs
7 Melee 9 Delighted 10 Carnivals 13 Means 15 Preen 16
Fanciful 18 Asians 19 Cedex 20 Insect 21 Summer 25 Dyed

Cryptic Crossword

Across: 1 Strapped 4 Odds 8 Reigns 10 Italic 11 Chime
12 Genie 14 Prague 17 Dalliance 18 Alleviate 22 Censor
23 Event 24 Verne 26 Doused 27 Trauma 28 Gold 29 Sleepers
Down: 1 Spry 2 Raised 3 Pencil 5 Deluge 6 Sickened 7 Stern
9 Sheltered 10 Impatient 13 Nails 15 Acute 16 Watchdog
18 Annual 19 Lower 20 Averse 21 Endure 25 Mass



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Valentines

Put a smile on his face this Valentine's Day



WHILE Valentine's Day is traditionally reserved for romance, there are plenty of people who believe the celebration has become too commercial.

However, a little frivolity and fun can reduce the stress placed on buying gifts for a loved one, allowing you to find the perfect gift for your partner easily and show you are still a romantic at heart deep down.

Hunting for a Valentine's Day card for a man can be difficult, particularly if you are keen to find something that has meaning to you both but isn't soppy or covered in kisses and kittens.

One simple way round this issue is to create personal Valentine's Day cards ahead of February 14.

Instead of desperately trying to create something that epitomises your feelings for your special man, simply pick something that will make him laugh or smile and save the heartfelt romantic gesture for the message inside the card.

The simplest thing can add a personal touch and mark a normal card or

By James Booker

present out as something special.

It might just be something that you don't immediately realise until you take a second glance and it is this quality that makes them such amazing gifts.

A present for a loved one doesn't need to be awe-inspiring, it just has to be interesting and most importantly, heartfelt.

In fact some men are a great deal more romantic than the ladies, but that all depends on the man. Not all men would appreciate football-themed personalised Valentine's Day cards, just as not all women appreciate cuddly toy-themed cards.

The idea of personalised cards is that you use them to your advantage and choose a theme or design that is perfectly suited to the person they are intended for, whether that is male or female. When it comes to Valentine's

Day, all stereotypes should be left aside and the individual kept in mind at all times.

Anyone's intention on Valentine's Day is to make that special someone in their lives smile. It doesn't matter how you do this, whether it is through comedy, romance, or old-fashioned cheesy salutations. Just as long as you do something to create that smile, it doesn't matter what road you take to get there.

There are many themes that are very well suited to male recipients. There are the more obvious football and other sports themes, that can of course be personalised to your precise needs. Then there are other suitable themes such as music, or musical instruments.

There are even some personalised Valentine's Day cards that are a little more risqué, such as French Maid design cards, with the man's name written in the stockings. Such a card is guaranteed to be an ideal gift to make any man smile.

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Advertising Feature

The future of fitness

IF YOU'RE determined to get active in 2014, but want something a little more exciting than the treadmill, look no further as we round up the new crazes and classes heading to a gym near you soon.

Predicting a fitness trend can be an unpredictable business.

What about 2013 when, after seven decades of waiting, we finally had our male Wimbledon Singles champion. Did we all dust down our tennis rackets? Or did we, instead, traipse to dance studios and seek fitness guidance from a Miley Cyrus-inspired 'Twerk-out'?

What might seem like a maze of contradictions to us, though, comes as little surprise to fitness experts. At the end of every year, industry insiders use their knowledge and experience to judge what will be capturing the public's active imagination in the coming 12 months, and what we all be enjoying - or enduring - at gyms, parks and dance studios across the country when the New Year resolutions finally kick in. Here's a look at some new trends for 2014.

• Small group training

The normal, '30-odd people jammed in a studio' format of most gym classes can feel impersonal to your needs, difficult to book, and daunting if you're not a regular. But next year there'll be

By Nel Staveley

a move towards 'small group personal training', where personal trainers lead groups of only three to five clients. Combating the 'one size fits all' approach, small group personal training gives a more tailored programme for your body and fitness levels than the larger classes, but you still get the competitive motivation from working out with others, which gives it an edge over one-to-one personal training.

"People still want that personal service, but with the ability to share their experiences too," explains Lee Matthews from Fitness First gyms (www.fitness-first.co.uk).

Key health benefits include improved flexibility, strength and endurance, and cardiovascular fitness and stress reduction.

• High intensity interval training

In our time-poor modern world, lengthy workouts are falling out of favour. Very few of us have the spare hours, or the inclination, for endless trudging on the treadmill; we want to fit an effective workout in our lunch-break instead. Cue the unstoppable rise of 'high intensity interval training' (HIIT) - several short intense bursts of exercise, followed by periods of

rest, contained in workouts of 10-30 minutes maximum.

"It is far more effective at burning calories both from carbohydrates and fat than low intensity, steady state exercise," says Williams.

"Not only does it burn high amounts of calories in one short session, it also has a significant post workout calorie burn (or EPOC, Excess Post Oxygen Consumption) so you get double 'bang for your buck'."

This interval training has been on the radar of dedicated fitness followers for years, but it is now making its step over to the mainstream, with most personal trainers advocating it to their clients, and some gyms will now offer specific classes.

For example, Virgin Active health clubs offer their new '24 MAXercise' class - 24 high intensity exercises in 24 minutes.

While HIIT has its benefits, experts do advise that it should be approached sensibly, and not every workout session should be HIIT - Williams advises aiming for two to four sessions per week if you train regularly, and building up slowly if your body's new to it.

• Playground style fun

Most of 2014's fitness trends have a theme of simplicity and 'back to basics', and never is that clearer than in the emphasis on

good, old-fashioned fun.

From tribal dance classes to specifically-designed 'fitness playgrounds', 2014 looks set to be the year we start smiling, instead of grimacing, when we exercise.

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weight to build resistance.

The ultimate smile-raiser - dancing - is back with a vengeance too. Billed as 'the next Zumba', the phenomenally successful Latin American dance craze of 2012, comes Fierce, a South African tribal dance class, where participants are encouraged to "let loose as they tap into their warrior energy".

If that sounds a little too embarrassing, FitSteps (fan.fitsteps.co.uk) is a new 'fusion' dance class

blending Latin and Ballroom dances, and claims to burn up to 600 calories in one 45-minute class. Launched by Strictly Come Dancing stars Natalie Lower and Ian Waite, and former contestant - and world champion swimmer - Mark Foster, FitSteps wholly believes in the power of dance to make you feel good - "and because you're having so much fun," says Lowe simply, "you don't even realise that you're working every part of the body."



• Small group training at Fitness First. Picture credit: PA Photo/Professional Images.

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New Fiat 500L Trekking boasts a more rugged dimension It's a great multi-tasker

BUILDING on the success of the recently launched 500L small MPV, Fiat has now added this Trekking variant to the range.

This model's beefed up bumpers, lower-body cladding and raised ground clearance adds a more rugged crossover look.

The 500L has already been awarded a five-star safety rating by Euro NCAP, but the 500LTrekking is the first Fiat to feature City Brake Control (a low speed collision avoidance system) as standard.

There are four engine options: 1.4-

REVIEW: Fiat 500L Trekking
By **Philip Shoulder**
@writeonmotoring

litre Fire petrol and the 875cc TwinAir Turbo, plus the 1.3 (with manual and automatic transmissions) and 1.6-litre MultiJet 2 turbo diesel.

For a £700 premium over the normal 500L, Trekking spec is based on the standard car's Lounge trim, but adds 17" alloy wheels and tinted rear windows.

Highlights include a panoramic glass roof, air-conditioning, cruise control, and the company's new Uconnect touch-screen infotainment system.

There's attractive bespoke seating, covered in a mesh effect material, combined with faux-leather inserts. Unfortunately the seat bases are a bit short and lack lower lumbar and lateral

support - meaning that some drivers may not be able to get as comfortable as they'd like.

Rear passengers get ample legroom, although headroom is only average.

Ergonomically the dashboard scores well, with clear and intuitive controls and stand out design features include an aircraft-style parking brake lever. There's no shortage of storage places, thanks to 22 compartments of different sizes dotted around the cabin.

A 400 litre boot incorporating 'Cargo magic Space' allows the boot to be split into separate sections and a flat load area, combined with an easily collapsible 'Fold&Tumble' rear seat, and folding front seat will ensure that 2.4m long loads can be carried.

The combination of excellent visibility and light but direct steering makes it an absolute breeze to thread the 500L Trekking around town.

Even on faster A and B roads the Fiat feels at home, thanks to its wieldy nature and composed body control.

Trekking can also venture off the beaten track, thanks to standard mud and snow tyres and its Traction+ electronic traction control system, which simulates the behaviour of a locking electromechanical differential.

Downsides include a fair bit of road and wind noise at motorway speeds



• The new Fiat 500L Trekking

and a firm ride at all speeds.

However, this firmness is well controlled and never deteriorates into harshness or discomfort.

The 104 bhp 1.6-litre diesel proves a sweet unit, being surprisingly smooth and also eager enough, thanks to the 236lb ft of torque on tap at 1750 rpm. The gear change has a chunky yet positive action and the clutch uptake is smooth.

VERDICT:

Fiat's funky compact MPV is a great multi-tasker; with the space and practicality to cope admirably with family duties, while also being desirable to own and fun to drive.

This new Trekking model adds a more rugged element to the 500L, and allows it to be as adept at negotiating a bumpy country lane or slippery dirt track, as it is threading through the urban sprawl.



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'Stoke edged out at home to Saints

AN EARLY try for Freddie Gleadowe was not enough for Basingstoke RFC, as they lost 20-13 at home to Bury St Edmunds on Saturday.

His opening effort came after just three minutes, and although Ryan Trevaskis subsequently missed the conversion he soon made up for it by kicking a penalty shortly afterwards.

Bury responded and soon added a try of their own courtesy of Casey Stone, although they too missed the conversion as Jesse Rush missed his effort from in front of the posts.

Both sides missed a penalty before half-time, to leave the scores at 8-5 to the hosts.

Two quick tries after the break for Bury turned the game around; the first of which coming after Matt Edison won a line-out, allowing Chris Snelling to score.

Rush again missed the conversion, but followed it up by scoring and converting his own try minutes later.

And Rush was back on the scoresheet with five minutes remaining as he kicked over a penalty.

'Stoke hit back as Gleadowe got his second try of the game, with Travaskis again missing the conversion.

The result meant that 'Stoke earned the bonus point, but they remain 10th in the National League Three London and South East with 32 points.

They next host Guernsey on Saturday.

Find us on Twitter
@BasingstokeNews

Bison dig in and roar back to claim victory

By Adam Flinn

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

BASINGSTOKE Bison got back to winning ways at home on Saturday, although they had to come from behind to take the win 5-4 from bottom-side Peterborough Phantoms.

A hat-trick from Tomas Karpov helped secure Bison the victory in their only game of the weekend, and end a run of three defeats in a row.

The Phantoms had opened the scoring after just 38 seconds through Erik Piatak, and were quickly two ahead as Darius Pliskauskas grabbed another just 13 seconds later.

It got worse for the home side as former Bison Marcel Petran got the Phantoms' third on the powerplay at 3:19, for a deserved three-goal advantage.

Karpov was able to pull one back for the Bison at 8:07, with the goal coming on a powerplay and assisted by Joe Greener.

Ciaran Long reduced the deficit further in the dying moments of the first period, after winning a face-off and knocking the puck past Phantoms' netminder Kamil Jarina.

Bison were soon in front as two quick goals in the second period, co-incidentally coming at 38 and 51 seconds in as Phantom's first two efforts had done in the opening period.

Karpov and Joe Rand were the



scorers, before a Marc Levers powerplay goal at 32:38 levelled the scores at 4-4 going into the final 20 minutes of the match.

But it was Karpov who completed his hat-trick in emphatic style, by scoring what would prove to be the winning goal at 50:41 on the powerplay.

With two minutes left, the Phantoms replaced netminder Jarina with outskater Damien King, as they pushed for an equaliser.

The Phantoms were awarded a penalty in the final minute, but Pliskauskas shot was saved by Bison netminder Dean Skinnis and the hosts hung on for victory.

Bison are back up to second in the English Ice Hockey Premier League table, and are level on 52 points with leaders Manchester Phoenix.

They next host Sheffield Steelers on Saturday, before travelling to Peterborough in the reverse fixture on Sunday.

• **Tomas Karpov** (Picture by Grant King)

Sport Bites

Joy of Joyce!

YOUNG Basingstoke snooker player Mickey Joyce has been celebrating his first competitive half-century break, becoming the second-youngest Chandler's Ford Snooker Club member to reach the milestone.

The 10-year-old's personal best 54 came against Jeremy Chislett in the Eastleigh and District Under-18 League.

Mickey was the Cuestars South of England Under-21 Bronze Tour Champion last year, and is currently fifth on the Silver Tour rankings.

Wintney win

HARTLEY Wintney recorded their first league win of 2014 on Tuesday, as they beat Bedford Sports 5-2 at home.

The results put Wintney up to 13th in the Combined Counties Premier, with 30 points after 20 games.

Wintney are back in action at home to Windsor on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Tadley Calvea return to action in the Wessex First Division on Saturday, as they host Team Solent.

Best result yet

BASINGSTOKE off-road driver Jason Nicoll has secured his best result of the season in the All Wheel Drive Club Britpact Safari Championship in Ilfracombe, North Devon.

He finished first in class and ninth overall, although downshift problems with the gearbox prevented him from getting further up the leaderboard.

Jason followed up the result by coming second in class, and 11th overall, at the final event of the season in South Wales.

Basingstoke and Overton's runners step up to card impressive cross country finishes

TWO running clubs from North Hampshire claimed a number of high finishes in the county's Cross Country Championships, which took place earlier this month.

The championships took place at Fleming Park in Eastleigh,

although the wet weather at the start of the year had left the course in a muddy and challenging state.

As a result of this, the start and finishing area had to be moved.

But runners from the Overton

Harriers and the Basingstoke and Mid Hants running groups put in strong performances, and were rewarded with 18 top-10 results in total.

It was a successful event for Overton veteran runners Mike Bliss and Cath Wheeler, who

were crowned the winners of both county titles.

Basingstoke and Mid Hants younger athletes enjoyed plenty of success with the under-13 girls claiming the team gold, courtesy of Rebecca Poole, Rebecca Bullock, Zoe Frost and

Tayla Wegg.

There were three further bronze medals, courtesy of Charlotte Chalwin in the under-20 women's event, Lucy Wildash in the under-15 girl's race and Reece Newell in the under-11 boy's event.

Callum Cleary, Oliver Butler, Richard Fernando, Jenny Helyar, Gemma Bigg, Gemma Wildash, Freya Davis, Maddie Deadman, Amber Rowan and Lucy Hempstead also finished in the top-10 of their various categories.

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Inside: 'Stoke edged out at home to Saints | Bison dig in and roar back to claim victory | Wintney win

BOSS - DISCIPLINE WAS IMPRESSIVE

Dragons bounce back with two wins from two games

JASON Bristow has praised his side's discipline, as the Dragons progressed to the semi-finals of the Hampshire Senior Cup with a 2-1 win over neighbouring Whitchurch United on Tuesday night.

Goals from Jordace Holder-Spooner and Kezie Ibe, either side of a Nic Turpin strike, gave the visitors the win over their Wessex Premier rivals.

It was the second win on the spin for Bristow's men, who were much improved on Saturday as they romped to a 3-1 victory at Eastbourne Borough.

"We've used the squad well in the last two games and the work rate has been first class in both games," said Bristow.

"Whitchurch are doing very well in their league - the pitch was very soft and heavy, which was a bit of a leveller. It was a windy and rainy night. Credit to our lads for turning up in the right frame of mind and getting the win, but also credit to Whitchurch for making a game of it. And Saturday was a really good win, and a bit of a reverse from games we've played in recent times, in that they had a lot of possession, while we were clinical and hit them on the break a few times.

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

"It was a very disciplined performance from us, and we had some very good performances from individuals as well as a team.

"It was really pleasing following on from a really disappointing result on Tuesday."

This weekend, Basingstoke host high-flying Sutton United, a team whose forward threat is something Bristow has warned his side need to be wary of.

"They've got a lot of very, very good individuals, particularly going forward," said the Dragons' boss.

"They're got some top, top players and will be a very difficult side to keep at bay.

"We've got to be very disciplined again in the way we play, and make sure we stick to our tasks and our jobs that we work on in training."

Bristow also remains hopeful on the fitness of striker Ibe and midfielder Anthony Jenkinson, who suffered slight ankle and thigh problems respectively on Tuesday night.



**Whitchurch United 1
Basingstoke Town 2**

Basingstoke battled past Whitchurch to reach the last four of the Hampshire Senior Cup on Tuesday (Picture by Les Chase)

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